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#### IV.—YASNA XLVI.

My dear and venerated friend, the late lamented Professor R. von Roth, of Tuebingen, used to say that he preferred a free translation of metrical matter to a literal one (it being always understood that the texts had been exhaustively examined by the translator beforehand, and explained in so far as he possessed the opportunity and the power). His reason was the obvious one that free rendering leaves no room for pretexts which might cover up the translation's uncertainty as to what was in reality the ancient author's point.

The essence of an idea cannot be given without an emphasis, and that so unmistakable that it excludes all that may be equivocal; the translator must say what he thinks his author meant, or he might quite as well say nothing whatsoever at all. A rhythm also is to the last degree desirable, for, as writers who use it well know, it helps to express the sentiment of what is said. For this reason I have taken the advice of a friend well versed in literary composition,<sup>1</sup> and I have printed some pieces of free rendering of the Gâthas in the Asiatic Quarterly Review.<sup>2</sup> I here offer another, which, my friends will be assured, has only been made after the closest examination and reproduction of all the texts that are extant and relevant, completed with all the patience and energy that I could command during the course of many years.<sup>3</sup> I give this fragment here also because it contains my latest views, for, as all critics know, one's views on these most difficult compositions seldom reach a stage at which they may not be in some particulars still further changed for the better.

Zarathushtra (Zoroaster), a princely priest living in ancient Bactria, is engaged defensively and offensively in carrying through a campaign in what must have been pretty nearly a religious civil

<sup>1</sup> See the Times of India, Sept. 24, 1894.

<sup>2</sup> See the Asiatic Quarterly Review for January, 1895, and also for October.

<sup>3</sup> See 'The Five Zarathushtrian Gâthas, with the Zend, Pahlavi, Sanskrit and Persian texts, translations and commentary, by L. H. Mills, D. D. Pp. 622 + xxx. Brockhaus, Leipzig, 1892-94.' 30/. See also the Festgruss to Professor R. von Roth, where, at p. 193, I have given a Sanskrit translation of Yasna XXVIII, for which I received the special thanks of the venerable scholar.

war. Not so much moved by a poet's inspiration as by fierce passions and anxious political interest, he gives expressions to fears, hopes, and appeals which are called for by the situation; and collecting bits which he had often doubtless recited to his immediate comrades, he weaves them into a whole, to be delivered at some meeting of the tribes who were from time to time grouped about their leaders to confer. Doubtless much of this production, as it was originally chanted, has been lost; but what remains of it seems to me to be graphic; and it even casts some oblique light on history. The metre is practically Trishtub, one of the oldest metres of the R̥ig Veda prevailing in the Vasishṭha Hymns, and this of itself affords a strong proof of the remote antiquity of the strophes.

I discard here all attempt at a mechanical reproduction of the numbered syllables as not being adapted to English, endeavouring only to preserve a rhythm, for I have given a specimen of an exact imitation in the periodical quoted above. Here, as in those other pieces, I often allow the accent perhaps an unusual value, as rendering a word of fewer syllables equal to one much longer, or to two; and even the natural cadence, where it is deepened by feeling, seems to me to claim a similar concession. The reader can easily see that Yasna XLVI describes (by inference) a chequered but not a broken career. Reverses have been experienced and ground lost, but the poet-prince determines on a rally, and endeavours to encourage his friends by promises, while he intimidates his opponents by threats.

## YASNA XLVI.

### A HYMN OF ZOROASTER.

#### *De profundis*

1. To what land shall I turn? where with my ritual go?<sup>1</sup>  
 Of kinsmen, allies, or the mass  
 None to content their service offer me,  
 Nor have they yet who rule the province, evil,  
 How then to please Thee, Mazda, Lord!<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The later Zoroastrianism not inaptly takes these words, which have become sacrosanct, as the first chant of every departed soul. It (the soul) takes its place near the head of the deceased and utters them.

<sup>2</sup> His innovations, while they help to compact his party, just in that proportion infuriate his opposition.

2. This know I Mazda wherefore foiled I wander  
 My flocks so small,<sup>1</sup> and following so feeble ;  
 To Thee in grief I cry, behold it, Master,  
 Thy grace vouchsafing me, as friend bestows on friend,  
 Showing with pureness Thy Good Mind's riches best.

*hope*

3. When come Ahura, they the days' light-givers,  
 Stay of Thy people's Law, and onwards pressing,  
 Wise planning Saviours they with potent teaching?  
 To whom for help comes too the Good Mind's server?  
 Thee for my teacher Áhurá I seek.

*denunciations*

4. Who bear the Law these saints the faithless foeman<sup>2</sup>  
 From wealth of Herds doth hold with evil power ;  
 By his own deeds he cheats his folk of weal.  
 Who him from life and rule shall hurl expelling  
 Fields for the Kine with prospered skill he spreads.
5. He who as ruler helps not that assailant,  
 In our religion's creed and treaties faithful,  
 In the right living, may he, pure, to sinners,  
 Aright to prince with threat give warning,  
 "In rising crush they him, O Mazda Lord!"<sup>3</sup>
6. Who having power doth not thus approach him<sup>4</sup>  
 To the Lie-demon's home in chains will go ;  
 The wicked's friend is he and likewise wicked,  
 But righteous he who loves the righteous,  
 Since the primeval laws Thou gavest, Lord."

*the only help*

7. Whom then as guard to save us will they set me  
 When as his aim for harm the wicked marks?  
 Whom have I then but Thee Thy Fire, and Meaning?

<sup>1</sup> Flocks and herds were commissariat as well as property.

<sup>2</sup> The chief of the Daeva-party.

<sup>3</sup> See my Gáthas, p. 550, for alternatives to this most difficult verse ; see also The Sacred Books of the East, vol. XXXI, p. 135.

<sup>4</sup> "Approach him to warn, or approach us to help" ; see my Gáthas, p. 553.

By deeds of whom Thou shieldest Right, Ahura ;  
To me this wonder-power for faith declare.

*revenge*

8. He who my settlements to harm hath given  
Ne'er may his burning wrath through deeds destroy.  
In hate to him come that which Weal opposeth,  
That to his body comes which holds from blessing,  
May nought from vengeful wrath deliver, Lord !

*contrast*

9. Who is the offerer who heeds me foremost  
How in our rites to praise Thee, well to be invoked ?  
Pure for Thou art above us, great Ahura.  
What Thine through Right declared the Herds creator  
That seek Thy saints as my blest message, Lord.

*appeal and promise*

10. Who e'er, to me, be he or man, or woman,  
Our tribes gift gives which Thou the best perceivest,  
Prize for the holy gives with Good Mind's ruling,  
Whom, praising You, I urge as comrade leading,  
Forth to the Judge's Bridge<sup>1</sup> with all I go !

*a curse*

11. Karps,<sup>2</sup> yea, and Kavis<sup>2</sup> are with foul kings joining,  
Deeds which are evil with, man's life to slay ;  
Cursed by their souls and selves, their being's nature,  
From Judgment's Bridge they fall, the final pathway  
In Demon's Home at last their bodies<sup>3</sup> lie !

*a brighter side*

12. When Right-inspired and 'midst Tura's<sup>4</sup> kinsmen  
Come from Fryana forth 'midst those illustrious  
They who Devotions lands with Zeal are helping  
With these together God through Good Mind dwelleth,  
To them in helpful grace commanding speaks.

<sup>1</sup> The Chinvat Bridge which extended from Mt. Alborj over Hell toward Heaven ; to the infidels and sinners it becomes narrow so that they fall ; but it becomes wide as nine javelins' length to the righteous (so the later Zoroastrianism).

<sup>2</sup> Hostile parties.

<sup>3</sup> Or 'their habitation is.'

<sup>4</sup> Border Turanian allies.

13. Who Zarathushtra gifts 'midst men vouchsafeth  
 Righteous is he himself 'midst men declared;  
 Life upon him bestows the Lord Ahura,  
 Farms that are his promotes with Good Mind helping;  
 Comrade for you through Right we think him meet.

*a voice from the throng<sup>1</sup>*

14. Whom hast Thou thus, O Zarathushtra righteous?  
 Who seeks distinction in our holy toils?  
 'Tis he himself heroic Vishtasp Kavâ<sup>2</sup>;  
 Whom in the same abode Thou, Lord, shalt gather  
 These in the words of Good Mind I invoke!

*a group addressed*

15. To you I speak, O Haechad-aspa, kinsmen,  
 Since things unlawful ye discern and lawful;  
 By these your deeds ye help the holy State  
 With the primeval laws which Mazda gave!<sup>3</sup>
16. Come, Frashaostra thou with offerers, Hvogva!  
 With those we seek to bring this land's salvation;  
 Come where Devotion blends with Holy Justice,<sup>4</sup>  
 Where lie the Realms desired of Good Mind,  
 Where God in His own might<sup>5</sup> abides,
17. Where I in holiest metre chant the doctrines;<sup>6</sup>  
 Never the measureless profane<sup>4</sup> I'll utter;  
 Praise with Obedience and with gifts I offer;  
 Who severs keenly each the false and lawful  
 May He with wondrous<sup>7</sup> Holiness give heed!<sup>7</sup>

*rewards here*

18. Who sanctity to me concedes for blessing  
 Him of my wealth give I through Good Mind best;

<sup>1</sup> Poetical conception, or, as in modern writings, a merely rhetorical expression.

<sup>2</sup> The King.

<sup>3</sup> A line is, curiously, missing here.

<sup>4</sup> Asha, or the sacrosanct Law.

<sup>5</sup> See my Gâthas, p. 561: possibly 'in His chosen Home,' or 'citadel.'

<sup>6</sup> Metre sacred as in the Veda.

<sup>7</sup> See my Gâthas and S. B. E. XXXI at the place.

Griefs upon him I send who sends oppressions ;  
 Aright, O Lord, I seek your will to gladden,  
 This is mine understanding's choice and aim.

*and on high*

19. Who from the Right for me true welfare worketh,  
 For Zarathushtra help most wished and mighty,  
 Him give I the reward this earth beyond  
 With all mind-blessings gained through holy pasture;<sup>1</sup>  
 These teaching me, O Lord, art Thou most wise !

L. H. MILLS.

<sup>1</sup>Agriculture was sacred, for the best of reasons: the communities lived by it and desired to protect it from the more habitual raids of Turanians on the north and Daeva-worshippers on the south. This also explains the fierce enthusiasm of their religion which enshrined it. (The work on the Gâthas quoted above contains the literary apparatus and argument to my translation of them (the Gâthas) in *The Sacred Books of the East*, vol. XXXI, 1887. It is likewise, of course, its sequel. Those who wish to familiarise themselves with texts written in Zend and Pahlavi characters should study the above works in connection with 'The ancient MS of the Yasna generally cited as J.<sup>2</sup> collotyped, with an introductory note by L. H. Mills, D. D. Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1893. 10 guineas.' The Zend in this MS is translated in S. B. E. (Sacred Books) XXXI, and both the Zend and Pahlavi of the Gâtha-portion of it are translated in my Gâthas; the Pahlavi is also deciphered there and edited with the collation of all the known MSS.)